

**For Immediate Release**

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**Bounce Back Memphis promotes storm recovery**

*City Council urges citizens, businesses to spend dollars at home*

**September 16, 2003**—Help your city by vacationing at home.

That's one message of the Bounce Back Memphis campaign to promote recovery from the devastating summer storm. The Memphis City Council initiative urges individuals and businesses to make Memphis-first spending decisions, at least through the holiday shopping season.

"After the storm, there was a team effort where neighbor helped neighbor," said Brent Taylor, City Council Chairman. "We want to use that team spirit to generate economic recovery. The storm packed a real economic punch and we're fighting back."



Bounce Back Memphis encourages Memphians to spend their money at home to help make up storm losses. A study by the Sparks Bureau of Economic Research at the University of Memphis estimated the size of the economic wallop: \$116 million in lost Shelby County retail sales; \$1.9 million in lost city sales taxes; \$140 million in Memphians' lost wages and salaries.

Clear Channel TV, Radio and Outdoor has signed on to support Phase I of the campaign. In the coming weeks, Taylor and Council Member TaJuan Stout Mitchell will make a series of media appearances to spread the message—think Memphis first, redirect spending locally.

With a multiplier effect, each bounce-back buck doubles as it ripples through the economy. "MLGW says 340,000 customers lost power," Taylor said. "If each of those individuals and businesses spent \$100 more locally, that \$34 million would make a \$72 million impact. That's the boost we need." As spending spreads

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through the local economy, businesses grow, new jobs are created, tax revenues rise, and all Memphians benefit—employees, business owners, families, churches, schools, civic groups and charities. The campaign urges Memphians to help themselves by helping their neighbors.

In the storm aftermath, the City Council served as Recovery Central, connecting those in need with those who could help. Staffers worked late and on weekends to answer thousands of calls from storm-struck citizens, providing information and a sympathetic ear. Bounce Back Memphis continues that recovery effort.

The Bounce Back logo and theme will be used on a variety of promotional materials, such as stickers, cards, signs, inserts and the Council web site. Suggestions for Memphis-first spending include: vacation at home, buy locally instead of online, invite friends and relatives to visit. Businesses could help Memphis rebound by holding meetings here, choosing local vendors, and providing employee discounts at local shops.

At their retreat in January, Council members named strong neighborhoods as a priority. Phase II of Bounce Back Memphis will include a Council initiative to target neighborhoods for business development through tax incentives.

"A survey presented at our retreat showed Memphians have pride in their city," Taylor said. "We're counting on their pride and neighborliness to help us recover from the storm."